

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ELECTIONS

Hearing Date: March 18, 2021 8:00 AM

Printed on: March 22, 2021 4:30 PM

COMMENTS FOR: The Committee will hear invited testimony on elections.

Kellye Duncan

self

San Angelo, TX

Dear Committee members,

Election integrity is vital to every community & county across our great state regardless of party preference. We must maintain our voter ID laws and have other means to maintain the truth in all elections. If we must show an ID to purchase beer, wine, alcohol, tobacco, BOARD AN AIRPLANE, cash a check or any other multiple times, we must prove who we are when voting. I would hate to learn that my mother had voted - she has been dead since 1997. I would hate to learn that my neighbor had voted even though he is not a registered voter. Please review with your heart the logical and legal methods to ensure our elections are true and fair. Thank you for your service to our great state of Texas!

Jay Garrett

self

San Angelo, TX

Dear Committee Members,

We have to show ID for almost everything we do - going to the doctor, going to school, going to the library, cashing a check - there is no reason to NOT show an ID to vote or to register to vote. A person should not be forced or coerced to vote much less given a bribe to vote. The ability to vote is an honor and a duty. Every responsible taxpayer should vote. Felons and undocumented immigrants should not be able to vote much less register to vote. Its a shame that a group of people have taken advantage of our great democracy which leads to the fact that we question our voting system. Thank you for hearing my testimony.

Teddye Read, Mrs

Teddye Read

San Angelo, TX

We have STATE and locally run elections / not Federal. They must be written / paper ballot. The ballot box must be secure. Only qualified citizens with photo ID should vote. Elections should be held on election day with only certain absentee ballots for those who are ill but are in right mind. We have a good procedure set up to accommodate. It must be followed. We must have honest elections with only those voting who are citizens in good standing and have registered and have photo id and a valid residence within the county in which they are voting. Let's get back to GOOD government and be law abiding citizens. I think all of these bills have to have common sense and for the good of the American people and not the government or illegals or unregistered voters.

Karen Pelphrey, Ms.

self/retired

Lubbock, TX

State of Texas Committee;

I am very concerned about the validity of our 2020 Presidential election. I personally experienced some questionable election activity. My beloved husband, Carl, died June 25, 2019. About 4 months after his death I took a copy of his death certificate to the Lubbock County Registrar's office. This was done months before the November 2020 election. About 6 weeks before Texas residents would vote I received two mail in ballots. One with my name and one with my husband's name. In about another 10 days I received 2 more forms to request absentee ballots. One in my name and one in my husband's name. I was very suspicious about what was coming in our elections at that point. I wanted Trump to win so much that I was tempted to try and use them all to vote possibly 4 times. Who knows maybe even 5 times if I voted in person too? Fortunately I am a Christian and did not yield to the temptation. I voted locally in person using my driver's license and voter registration card. The voter roles need to be purged and corrected. Most people would never take the time to deliver a death certificate to the Registrar's office.

I know a previous election in Texas in 2018 was under suspicion during the Ted Cruz vs Beto O'Rourke contest. I've read some research was done but none of the investigation was followed completely. I guess it seems overwhelming to research this problem. But please secure our Texas elections at the city, county, state, and federal level.

Sandra Kelly

self

Denton, TX

Our system of government demands active participation from citizens to direct the future of our country.

I am deeply disappointed in anyone, any American citizen and certainly anyone that took the oath of office, who seeks to restrict access to the right to vote.

Using any false statement, much less 'fraudulence in elections' is dishonorable and unworthy of your office.

We saw this accusation disproven in multiple courts and by the Supreme Court. There is no indication of election fraud in Texas and no election fraud in other states that can be cited as examples indicating any need for limitations on voting.

The opportunity to vote should be expanded, not reduced.

We should all want as many as possible who are eligible to have a voice in the direction of our nation.

We pay taxes, we invest in government. We should be allowed to have a voice in our system. That is the fundamental premise of our nation

It is your responsibility to ensure and protect the right to vote and the access to that vote is protected for everyone.

Voter disenfranchisement is a disgrace. Please stop all actions related to voter suppression.

Vote to expand voting. Vote to up hold our system of government, not destroy it.

Thank you.

Eric Mann

Self

Dallas, TX

We recently had one of the most secure elections in our history. Voter turnout was high and the Peoples' Voices were heard. We do not need more unnecessary restrictions on voting. We need to make it easier to vote. Increase polling locations and times,

institute automatic voter registration, and seek technologies that will allow for at-home voting. Drive through voting should be allowed and drop off locations should be increased. We already have strict voter ID laws and mail-in ballots have always been secure. It is how I voted when I was deployed in the USAF. Please don't make it harder for eligible voters to practice their right to vote.

Rachael Vorberg-Rugh, Ms

Self; freelance writer/editor

Fort Worth, TX

I'm writing in support of House Bill 1382, which would require counties to provide online tracking for the entire process of requesting an application for a mail-in ballot until the completed ballot is accepted or rejected. This would reduce anxiety among voters and provide a more transparent, accurate, and secure elections process.

I'm also writing to oppose House Bill 25, which would prohibit counties from distributing unsolicited vote by mail applications even to voters over 65, who automatically qualify.

More generally, I'm writing in support of increasing voter access in Texas, not limiting it any more than is already the case (one of the worst in the nation). I relocated to Texas several years ago from the Pacific Northwest. In Oregon and in Washington, I was able to vote by mail through election systems that are safe, secure, convenient, and cost-effective. I had the opportunity to research my choices through a state-provided, independently-vetted, nonpartisan voter's pamphlet. I had the ability to track my ballot as it moved through the validation and counting process. Counties invested in safe, secure systems and were spared the recurring expense of staffing huge numbers of polling places. States like OR and WA have shown the way - without seeing any increase in voter fraud - and I hope Texas will follow their example.

More immediately, I urge legislators to increase voter access by opening online registration to all eligible TX citizens, allowing voter registration at any time up to and including Election Day, expanding the forms of identification that are acceptable voter ID, automatically registering voters when they apply for state-issued ID, allowing no-excuse-required mail-in ballots to all voters (not just those over 65). I'd also like the legislature to engage an independent, truly nonpartisan third-party to conduct a feasibility study on what it would take to move TX to an all vote-by-mail system that is safe, secure, and fair to all citizens.

I expect representatives in a democratic system to work to protect citizens voting rights, and to encourage every citizen to exercise their right to vote in free and fair elections. Please surprise me and live up to that ideal.

Mary Montalvo

Self

Fort Worth, TX

Support

Mary Montalvo

Self

Fort Worth, TX

Oppose

Eileen Chapman

Self Retired

COMMENTS FOR: The Committee will hear invited testimony on elections.

Lumberton, TX

Stop voter fraud

Lisa Gray

Self

Friwindswood, TX

We must demand voter ID as well as use secure voting machines. Otherwise free and fair elections will never happen again.

Debbie Barrera

Self, retired

Waxahachie, TX

Conviction of a felony and sentenced to a federal prison is too good for anyone who commits these crimes. Federal prisons are a vacation, not a punishment. Anyone who commits a federal crime should be sentenced to a state jail or prison. Just my opinion.

Juanita Burleson

self- city Government

Anson, TX

we have to do something to keep our elections honest!! No more stealing of an election

James Skowbo

Self

Georgetown, TX

Strongly support HB1724 and 1622

Celia M Segovia

Myself

McAllen, TX

Today I ask you to vote yes for each bill that will protect Texas elections and Texans votes. I was born and raised in Texas and have the right to a secure election void of fraud and do not want my vote to be canceled because someone not eligible has cast a vote. Each bill being presented today is essential to a free and fair election open only to eligible Texans who love cherish this beautiful State. Vote yes to each of these bills that give Texas one person one legal vote.

Wendy McRoberts

self

Danbury, TX

I SUPPORT HB 1382

I OPPOSE HB 25

Pamela Oglesby

None

Cedar Park, TX

A true democracy should make every effort to minimize the obstacles to voting and maximize the turnout of eligible voters. I worked the election polls last fall and saw no evidence of voter fraud. If people didn't have the proper ID or failed to bring their mail in ballot to vote in person, they would return home and bring back the correct documents. It has become obvious that the efforts to further suppress the vote by creating more hurdles is ant-democracy and a power grab.

Michele Ingalls

Self - unpaid local organizer

Frisco, TX

The freedom to vote is fundamental to democracy. It's time for TX to make voting *easier* for every Texan. It's time for Texas to step into the modern era and use ONLINE, SAME DAY, Voter Registration. To increase election security - make sure *ALL* voting machines have an auditable paper trail - ideally switch to hand marked, paper ballots. It's well past time for Texas to ensure and protect all of the rights in the 1965 Voters Rights Act.

Miguel Escobar

self

Edinburg, TX

I hope that you all realize the importance of upholding election integrity in our state and in this country. Election fraud DID occur in this state and around the country. As a citizen I'm limited in what I can do at the legislative level, so the responsibility to ensure that fraudulent elections do not occur is heavily weighted on you all, our elected officials. Please make the right and honorable choices to ensure that moving forward our election processes are protected and that those who have committed fraud are held accountable to the highest levels of the law with proper punishment. Thank you for your service.

Bianca Gracia, MRS

Latinos for America First, Latinos for Trump, Lideres de la Comunidad, and Americanos Conservative United

Pasadena, TX

Our organizations membership and over 2K Pastors across Texas stand and support this bill.

Robert Guajardo

Self

San Antonio, TX

Stop election fraud & manipulation of ballots by Biased election officials, lawyers & judges.

Malorie Lerma

Latinos for America First & Latinos for Trump

San Antonio, TX

Might civil rights were violated in this election as a Latina.

Lisa Nilsson

self, election watcher

Boerne, TX

Thank you for your diligent attention to the urgent and critical need to assure election integrity in Texas. The many irregularities and law violations revealed in the general election of November 2020 has caused millions of Texans to seriously question and even doubt the validity of certain candidates and the security of elections in general. The work you do in this committee is the MOST IMPORTANT work of this legislative session. If the integrity and security of elections are lost in Texas everything else elected bodies do in the future will be overshadowed by fear of governmental tyranny.

I write today on behalf of myself. I served as an election watcher in Bexar County for both Early Voting and at Central Count on November 3rd and 4th, 2020. I also served as a watcher for the Congressional District 23 recount in Bexar County in August 2020.

I have read over the bills that you are considering today. For the most part, I like and support all of them, but I will comment further on a few.

HB 1724“Seeing or hearing” is very important and specific language as there is no point in trying to observe computer screens, ballots with discrepancies, the tabulation process or anything else if you can’t actually see. Under section 2 (33.058) the addition of language that allows watchers to call to attention an irregularity or violation of law is a VERY important addition. I was saddened and amazed to observe that the clerks and election judge in the precinct where I observed the closing procedures of early voting on October 30th did not know their responsibilities and obligations to follow the law and print audit log tapes before shutting down the tabulating machine. They were told by the Bexar Election Administrator that they should not run this log and print the tapes as she would do that at headquarters at a later date. This order is a direct violation of Texas law and made it impossible for watchers to have a record of the vote tabulations in each precinct. This instruction violated the law but I was POWERLESS TO STOP their actions that could not be reversed.

HB 1725 is very important to prevent “Ballot Harvesting”. Thank you especially for the language under subsection “j” which says the ballot may not be counted if it arrives by some means other than the mail or a contracted carrier.

I appreciate the addition of penalties, including making some violations felonies with jail time for conviction.

HB 1382 I strongly endorse this bill. The upgrade to ballot markings and numbering that will be necessary for this law to be enacted by the county is an important improvement.

Finally, Resolution 237 is very important. In order to maintain the integrity of ballots and electronic records, our votes must be processed and stored in the United States. Citizens need this to be law in order to trust that our elections are true and valid and not manipulated by hostile foreign actors. I would simply change the word “should be” to “must be.”
